

The perception is that working mothers and parents have a greater desire for workplace flexibility than other workers; the reality is that men and women, parents and non-parents, young and older workers alike place a high priority on increased flexibility at work. We all want more time.

A study by the Employment Family Foundation found that 75 percent of workers prefer time off instead of overtime and 81 percent of women prefer to have that benefit.

For many employers, flexible work arrangements are necessary to attract and retain quality employees. In return for offering employees alternative work arrangements and greater flexibility in work schedules, employers gain a workforce that is more productive, committed and focused. For example an insurance company in my home State of Washington saw per-employee revenue increase 70 percent over 5 years after implementing flexible work options.

In talking with Wayne Williams who runs Telect in Spokane, Washington, he told me that they are doing more to give their employees greater flexibility including personal days and technology to give them the flexibility to work from home.

This isn't just a workforce issue, it is also a community and family issue.

The bill I am introducing would allow private sector employers to offer their employees additional time off in lieu of overtime pay. One of the greatest obstacles to flexibility in the workplace is the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act (known as the "FLSA"), which governs the work schedules and pay of millions of hourly workers. While the law may have been a good fit for the workforce of 70 years ago, it is simply not relevant to the needs of modern families.

Our labor force isn't what it used to be. Between 1950 and 2000, the labor force participation rate of women between 25 and 55 years of age more than doubled. Today, more than 75 percent of these women are in the labor market. Less than 12 percent of mothers with children under the age of 6 were in the labor force in 1950. Today, more than 60 percent work outside the home.

The FLSA fails to address the needs and preferences of employees in the area of flexible work schedules. Although salaried employees typically have greater flexibility in their day-to-day schedules, hourly employees are much more restricted—due in large part to the outdated FLSA—in their ability to gain greater flexibility in their work schedules.

The goal of the Family-Friendly Workplace Act is simple: to reconcile the overtime requirements under the FLSA with employee demands for increased workplace flexibility. Specifically, the bill would give private sector employers the option of allowing their employees to voluntarily choose paid compensatory time off (known as "comp time") in lieu of overtime pay. Since 1985, public sector employees have been able to bank comp time hours in order to have additional time off for vacation or other family needs. There is no justification for denying private sector employees an option under the FLSA which, by most accounts, has been successful and immensely popular with public sector hourly employees for over 20 years.

To be clear, the Family-Friendly Workplace Act would not change the employer's obligation under the FLSA to pay overtime at the

rate of one-and-one-half times an employee's regular rate of pay for any hours worked over 40 in a seven-day period. The bill would simply allow overtime compensation to be given—at the employee's request—as paid comp time off, at the rate of one-and-one-half hours of comp time for each hour of overtime worked, provided the employee and the employer agree on that form of overtime compensation. The bill contains numerous protections to ensure that the choice and use of comp time is a decision made by the employee.

Since we can't do anything about adding more hours to the day, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting something that gives us a little more flexibility in how we spend that time—the Family-Friendly Workplace Act. We need to respond to the growing needs of workers who want to better integrate work and family. Let's allow working women and men to decide for themselves whether paid time off or extra pay best fits their needs and that of their families.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF DANNY FEDERICI

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life long achievements of musician Danny Federici, long-time organ and accordion player for the E Street Band, a band that has become a staple of modern day American culture. Over his four-decade long career, Mr. Federici's signature style of playing has affected and inspired the lives of innumerable musicians and fans around the world.

Born in Flemington, New Jersey, Danny Federici began teaching himself how to play the accordion at the age of seven. His talents quickly earned him many local radio gigs, where he performed classical and polka music. A truly natural musician, it was he and original E Street Band drummer Vini Lopez, who invited Bruce Springsteen to join their band as they began conquering the music scene on the colorful boardwalk of Asbury Park, New Jersey. Often introduced by Springsteen as "Phantom Dan", he spent forty years lending his spontaneous and soulful playing to the countless performances of the E Street Band. Mr. Federici was one of the pillars of their signature sound and his playing evoked the boardwalk at Asbury Park, where he and his fellow band mates spent their childhood together. His accordion playing is most memorable in E Street Band hits such as "Fourth of July" and "Asbury Park".

During the time he spent away from the E Street Band, he recorded two solo albums, both jazz instrumentals. He had an unbreakable dedication to his music and his band mates but even more so to his wife Maya, and his three children, Jason, Harley and Madison. During his battle with Melanoma, he set up the Danny Federici Melanoma Fund, in the hopes that he could help others who were facing the same challenges that he was. His talents will forever be remembered by his family, friends, fans and band mates. In the words of Bruce Springsteen, "Those you are with, in the presence of miracles, you never forget. Life does not does separate you. Death does not sepa-

rate you. Those you are with who create miracles for you, like Danny did for me every night."

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the life of Danny Federici, whose inspiration and musical genius will continue to touch the lives of generations to come.

FORECLOSURE PREVENTION ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank Chairman FRANK, Ranking Member BACHUS and the Committee for their hard work. They have presented a thoughtful and creative proposal.

Housing is a very complex issue—it is also a very emotional one. We aren't just talking about abstract concepts, we are talking about a person's home. We're talking about real people with a real problem.

Prior to Congress I was a Realtor for over 20 years. I have worked with many families to help them realize their dream of home ownership. I have also served as chairman of the Virginia Housing Study Commission. Housing is an important issue for me and something I feel very strongly about.

I have seen good markets and bad. I have witnessed many changes to the mortgage market. I have struggled with how to define and protect against predatory lending practices. I have seen interest rates and loan products that seemed too good to be true—unfortunately, we have seen that in fact, many were too good to be true. I rise today to share my observations and concerns about the bill before us.

There are many components of this bill which I think are excellent and fully support. First Federal Housing Administration modernization is long overdue. FHA must be streamlined and made more efficient. Government Sponsored Enterprise regulatory reform would also help stabilize the housing market. I support an amendment to be offered today that will create a first time home buyer tax credit for low- to mid-income buyers. This would increase the number of buyers in the market—increasing demand now for an oversupply of homes. The bill also increases funding for foreclosure counselors and financial education. I also appreciate the additional funding for law enforcement to prevent mortgage fraud, and that Department of Veterans' Affairs loan limits are raised, and the enhanced appraisal standards and appraisal independence.

These are all well thought out, very important reforms that will help American families and the marketplace.

However, my concerns with today's package include the establishment of a new affordable housing fund to create new grants that can be directed to organizations that work specifically on housing issues. The bill does contain a provision that will prohibit the use of these grant funds for political activities, the fact is that many of the possible recipients engage in partisan political activities and therefore should

not receive funding to offset their costs. It is important to remember that money is fungible, so that if a group cannot use these grants specifically for political activities, it could certainly have more money freed up for political activities because of the injection of new grants funding.

I am also concerned about a \$300 billion federal loan guarantee. There are two important issues with this provision that I foresee. One, a lender with troubled loans could contact those homeowners and offer a federally backed loan—and refinance at a loss but now he has moved that loan from a potential total loss to 85 percent current value—and will be guaranteed by federal government should it foreclose. He now has no reason to work with that borrower should the borrower still face foreclosure. Two, this program has a huge impact on neighborhoods. Consider neighbor A who bought at the height of the market. This person struggles month to month but manages to pay his mortgage on time. Neighbor B and their lender agree to take advantage of the new program and negotiates their mortgage to 85 percent current value. Not only is fairness between the two neighbors and issue, but the new reduction in value can have a huge impact on the value of surrounding properties.

While I understand this is a voluntary program. My question is why can we not develop incentives for the private sector to do this and not obligate the American taxpayers with \$300B in loan guarantees?

Furthermore, there are several things already in the works. FHA secure is a new FHA product allowing homeowners to refinance their resetting Adjustable Rate Mortgages. So far, there are 3 times the refinances this year as in previous years. HOPE NOW is an alliance between counselors, services, investors that is working to prevent foreclosure through outreach to delinquent borrowers. The program provides counseling and loan work outs based on buyers' ability to pay. From July 07 through March 08 1.4m avoided foreclosures through these efforts. Also, Fannie Mae is currently working on a streamlined short sale program to allow the sale of property that is over-mortgaged.

Both the administration and the private sector need to do a much better job at explaining what is currently available. Neither has done a good job of explaining to the public these available options. As such, I can understand Chairman FRANK's frustration and desire to take action.

Again I thank the committee for their work and I would encourage us to institute the reforms in this package that I highlighted. However, I firmly believe we should take caution and allow ongoing efforts to work before we decide to go down the path of obligating American taxpayers for \$300B in loan guarantees.

TRIBUTE TO NAPLES HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL TEAM

HON. CONNIE MACK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

Mr. MACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Naples High School Softball Team for winning this year's Class 4A Florida State Championship last week.

Thanks to the pitching of sophomore Jaclyn Traina, who had 10 strikeouts in seven innings, and the hitting of senior Ashley Pinkerton, who had a batting average over .400 for the season, the Golden Eagles beat Pembroke Pines 5–2 and cinched their 12th overall state championship title.

With fierce determination and spirit, the Golden Eagles Softball Team worked together to defeat the No. 1 ranked school in the country.

Any of us who have played competitive sports understands the valuable lessons of hard work, teamwork and commitment. These memories and lessons will stay with these players for the rest of their lives and are made all the sweeter by their incredible win.

Madam Speaker, I know the people of Southwest Florida join me in offering our heartiest congratulations to the Naples High School Softball Team, their coaches, students and fans. We couldn't be more proud of their accomplishments this season.

TRIBUTE TO MS. BARBARA TAYLOR

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Barbara "BT" Taylor of Culpeper, Virginia on the occasion of her upcoming retirement from my Congressional staff and to thank her for her many years of service to the 7th Congressional District of Virginia.

BT is an active member of the Culpeper community, and as Outreach Director in my Culpeper District Office, she provides outstanding service to the citizens of the 7th District. She is a respected voice in the community with a true dedication to public service. BT plays an important role in developing relationships with constituents, local elected officials, businesses, schools, organizations, and community leaders. I know they will all miss her steady counsel and passionate advocacy.

As Members of Congress, we come to Washington with a passion for helping the people we represent. I can assure you that I am greatly aided in accomplishing that goal due to the tireless work and counsel of Barbara Taylor.

BT's passion and zeal for this country and for our Commonwealth is refreshing and unwavering. We would all do well to emulate her patriotic fervor and her passion for serving those around her.

While I will surely miss having BT as part of our official team, I am comforted in knowing that she will still be serving her community in many other ways. I am greatly privileged to have worked with BT over the years, but most importantly, I am honored to call her a friend.

Madam Speaker, I hope you will join me and my family in wishing BT, Charlie and the entire Taylor family all the best and in thanking BT for her contributions to the people of the Seventh District of Virginia.

HONORING DAVEY HUNT

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Davey Hunt, the 2008 Heard County High School STAR student.

In Georgia, Madam Speaker, the Student Teacher Achievement Recognition program honors the top senior in each of the State's 400 high schools and a teacher chosen by that student.

For Davey, the STAR student award squeezes in one more line to a resume already teeming with superlatives.

"Davey is simply the most brilliant student I have ever had the honor to teach," said Paul Mixon, the Heard County High educator whom Davey named as STAR Teacher. "His academic performance and mastery of complex material highlights an intellect that is both creative and constantly expanding. Davey demands that his teachers go beyond the basic concept of each course, as he quickly becomes an expert in each subject. Unlike so many of his generation, Davey is excited about learning."

Academic excellence and intellectual curiosity came early to Davey. After fifth grade, he attended Junior University summer camp where he had to build a bridge out of toothpicks. In what appears to be one of his few life lessons in disappointment, Davey's bridge didn't win the competition for holding the most weight without breaking. Nevertheless, a long-held fascination with design and construction took root.

Davey graduated over the years from toothpick engineering to aeronautical engineering, which he will study at the Nation's preeminent engineering school, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In addition to winning the STAR student award, Davey will reign as the valedictorian of Heard County's Class of 2008 and he received the Georgia Certificate of Merit, which goes to the State's best and brightest high school students.

Davey's record of academic excellence could stand alone, but his record shows him to be much more than a one-dimensional whiz kid. He served as editor of his school newspaper, *The Warcry*, won the 2007 Most Valuable Player Award for the track team, and made the 2007 All-Region Football Team and the 2007 All-State Academic Football Team.

Of course, a good high school experience isn't all work. He earned the friendship of his peers not with his good grades and athletic prowess, but with what his teacher Paul Mixon called his "warmth and wit." Those qualities led his classmates to tap him for homecoming king and Mr. Heard High.

Madam Speaker, the future of our Nation rests on the shoulders of today's young leaders. I'm proud that one of those young leaders, Davey Hunt, hails from Georgia's 3rd Congressional District. I pay tribute today to his outstanding record of achievements and wish him continued success as he begins the next phase of his life.